



December 8, 2004

Dr. John Faust
Senior Toxicologist
Office of Environmental Health
Hazard Assessment
1515 Clay Street, 16th Floor
Oakland, CA 94610

Re: Cal/EPA EJ Action Plan Implementation: Western Growers' Preliminary Comments regarding the Definition of "Multi-media Cumulative Impacts"

Dear Dr. Faust:

Following are Western Growers' comments on the definition of "Multi-media Cumulative Impacts" under Cal/EPA's Environmental Justice Action Plan (the "EJ Action Plan"). We support the comments recently submitted by the California Council for Environmental and Economic Balance. In particular, we urge you to consider the following recommendations as you deliberate on this very important definition.

We support Cal/EPA's effort to define "multi-media cumulative impacts" under the EJ Action Plan. We also believe that environmental justice programs should use clearly defined terms, which will allow Cal/EPA and all stakeholder groups to have a common understanding of the state's environmental justice policy.

In response to a suggested definition for "multi-media cumulative impacts" we recommend the following: "multi-media cumulative impacts means the adverse health risk posed by exposure to pollutants from multiple pollution sources." This definition is appropriate because it captures the multi-media aspect by referring to "pollution sources" as opposed to, for example, just air pollution sources. It also captures the cumulative aspect (i.e., sources evaluated in the aggregate) by referring to "multiple pollution sources".

This definition is also consistent with OEHHA's guidance on health risk assessment in that it incorporates both cancer and noncancer risk. It also allows consideration of multiple exposure pathways (e.g., air, water, food, etc.) and the toxicity of the pollutants involved.

We further believe that the definition of "multi-media cumulative impacts" should *not* include social factors (e.g., lack of health insurance, emotional stress, dilapidated housing, crime, poor nutrition, etc.). Environmental justice policies and related regulatory programs cannot be expected, nor should they be required, to resolve broader issues of social injustice. While these are issues that may present serious concerns for a community, they are issues that are beyond Cal/EPA's jurisdiction and are beyond Cal/EPA's capacity to resolve.